

Keen interest in anti-war campaign of IYSSE at Humboldt University in Berlin

Our correspondents
20 October 2014

The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE), the youth organization of the Socialist Equality Party (Partei für Soziale Gleichheit—PSG), is carrying out a campaign for public meetings in a number of German cities under the title: “Why does the German ruling elite want war? The historical and political reasons for the renewed bid for world power.”

There is an especially intensive campaign in Berlin, where the meeting will be held this coming Thursday at Humboldt University. Members and supporters of the IYSSE and the PSG have campaigned at factories and colleges and in public areas to win support for the meeting.

A major focus is Humboldt University. The university administration at one point sought to politically censor the IYSSE campaign and prevent the IYSSE chapter at Humboldt from criticizing the right-wing, militaristic positions of a number of professors.

Members of the IYSSE distributed a statement protesting against censorship, entitled “Scholarship instead of war propaganda.” The statement documents Humboldt University’s involvement in the ideological preparations for war.

Students at the university expressed shock at the attempt at censorship by the university administration. Many visited the information tables set up by the IYSSE on campus having previously read flyers or seen IYSSE posters.

Lilith studies medicine and philosophy at the university. Expressing indignation at the attempted censorship, she made comparisons to the German media. “The task of newspapers such as *Die Zeit* is to enlighten the public and report objectively, which it does on some issues, but on the question of militarism its coverage is completely tendentious.”

Elena is a 25-year-old graduate student in philosophy. She said she was profoundly disturbed by the openness with which war and militarism are currently discussed in Germany. “It is similar to the situation before the First World War,” she said, “when Kaiser Wilhelm declared that Germany had to play its role in the world, that it would need its own colonies.” She agreed that by means of such propaganda, the government was seeking to divert attention from the social problems within Germany itself.

“The Greens have always been a war party, a capitalist party,” Elena said. “But I do not understand why the Left Party propagates war.”

A history student commented on the promotion of war by the official opposition parties. “I find it intolerable that there is no longer a party that represents one’s interests,” he said. “The Left Party was my last hope. It has nothing to do with democracy when all the parties are for war.”

A member of the IYSSE said the shift by the Left Party to a policy of militarism made clear that the struggle against war is inseparable from the struggle against capitalism. The Left Party always defended capitalism and never represented the interests of workers, he said.

The fact that this party now openly advocates war demonstrated its true character and was itself an expression of the rapid move towards war. The struggle against the revival of German militarism required the building of the Fourth International as a mass revolutionary workers’ party.

At the heart of the campaign for the public meetings is the resolution adopted by the PSG at its Special Congress on September 20, 2014: “The return of German imperialism and the tasks of the Socialist Equality Party.” The resolution is being widely

distributed.

On the question of imperialism, the PSG resolution details the manner in which the federal government has systematically worked for more than a year to revive a policy of great power politics. The resolution roots the renewed drive to war in “the historic crisis of world capitalism and the system of nation-states upon which it is based.” It explains that the strategic aims of the German ruling class in Russia and the Middle East today are in direct continuity with the war policy first of Kaiser Wilhelm II and later the Nazis.

Based on this analysis, IYSSE members have exposed the lies of the mass media and the establishment parties, such as the claim that Germany must send weapons and military personnel to Syria to defend human rights against the terrorist group ISIS and aid beleaguered minorities. These pseudo-humanitarian arguments are used to appeal to popular sentiment and cloak the real strategic and economic objectives.

The campaign has evoked considerable interest not only at universities, but also at schools and factories. Many students and workers regard the onslaught of media propaganda for war and rearmament as intolerable. The speed with which militarism and war-mongering are once again being made acceptable has shocked public consciousness, but also awakened a yearning for an explanation and a perspective capable of opposing this development.

Young people respond to the official propaganda with healthy skepticism and are eager to hear an objective analysis of events. After learning of the IYSSE-PSG campaign, many have visited the *World Socialist Web Site* and sent emails expressing interest in further discussion as well as political literature. Many workers and young people from Turkey, Syria, Palestine and other Middle Eastern countries are anxiously following the developments in their countries of birth and are eager to read the analysis provided by the WSWS.

In advocating a socialist anti-war program based on the working class, members of the IYSSE are frequently asked about the nature of the Soviet Union and the former East Germany. The regimes in these states called themselves socialist and pro-working class. In reality, they undermined the conquests of the Russian Revolution of 1917 and paved the way for the restoration of capitalism 25 years ago.

Discussions repeatedly revolved around the role of the Greens, the Social Democratic Party and the Left Party and their turn to war-mongering. The PSG and IYSSE are increasingly seen as the only serious anti-war parties.



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